

## DETROIT/PONTIAC, MICHIGAN (WHITE LAKE)



**OFFICE LOCATION:** The WFO site is in a rural/residential area on a hilltop in White Lake Township, Oakland County, 10 miles NW of Pontiac, 34 miles NW of Detroit. Access is from M-59 via Teggerdine Road and White Lake Road. The property is bounded on the west and north by Indian Springs Metro park, on the south by the Pontiac Lake State recreation area, and on the east by Crosby Lake.

**OFFICE ACTIVITY:** The office operates 24 hours daily, seven days a week, and is a full service forecast office. The office has forecast responsibility for 17 counties in southeast Michigan, including marine forecast responsibility for Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair and nearshore waters of western Lake Erie. The WFO also has warning responsibility for 17 counties in southeast Michigan (covering a population of over 6 million), including the adjacent marine areas. The site has a WSR-88D Doppler radar and also is an upper air observation site. The office operates five NWR transmitters in Southfield (Detroit), Clio (Flint), Sandusky, Bad Axe, and Adrian. Data from cooperative, hydrologic, and agricultural observers and automatic stations are collected and relayed and the office has a service hydrologist on-station. There are several restaurants within a short drive of the office.

**COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION:** The immediate White Lake community offers a unique combination of a rural/residential environment with proximity to several large metropolitan areas. The office itself is embedded in an area of gently rolling hills and is surrounded by a golf course, nature park, several lakes, and a state recreation area. The WFO resides on one of the highest locations in southeast Michigan and offers a picturesque view of the surrounding area. Despite its rural/residential character, White Lake is in close proximity to several large cities, including Pontiac (10 miles), Detroit (34 miles), Flint (30 miles) and Ann Arbor (40 miles). NWS employees commute from all of these cities as well as from the community of White Lake itself. The population of the metropolitan area is between 4 and 5 million, making it one of the largest in the country. As such, the region offers a wide variety of cultural and entertainment activities. These include major sporting events, theater, music, dining, museums and numerous festivals. The area is also home to several world class hospitals and Universities, including the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and Wayne State University in Detroit. The regional economy is dominated by the auto industry and the area is home to world headquarters of General Motors, Ford Motor Company, Chrysler-Fiat, Compuware, Domino's Pizza, Little Caesars, and many others. With its location in the heart of the Great Lakes, the region has several busy international marine ports and is home to one the largest recreational boating communities in the world. Several motels are located within 5 to 10 miles of the office. Large complete-service hotels can be found 20 to 25 miles away along M-59, I-75 and I-696.

**CLIMATE:** The climate of the area is influenced by its location with respect to major storm tracks and the influence of the Great Lakes. Winter storms can bring combinations of rain, snow, freezing rain, and sleet with heavy snowfall accumulations possible at times. In summer, most storms pass to the north allowing for intervals of warm, humid, sunny skies with occasional thunderstorms followed by days of mild, dry,

and fair weather. Temperatures of 90 degrees or higher are infrequent but are reached during each summer. The most pronounced lake effect occurs in the winter when arctic air moving across the lakes is



warmed and moistened by the water. While most lake effect snow falls west and north of the area, there is an excess of cloudiness and a moderation of cold wave temperatures over southeast Michigan. The mean annual temperature is 48 degrees, ranging from a typical January day of 30 and 15 for high and low temperatures to 84 and 61 for an average July day. Rainfall is fairly uniform throughout the year. Average seasonal snowfall at Detroit Metropolitan Airport equals 41 inches. However, average annual snowfall near the office location is 60 - 70 inches.

**RECREATION:** The office is located on the outer fringe of the Detroit Metro area and has easy access to the

Palace of Auburn Hills (home of the basketball Pistons). In downtown Detroit, Comerica Park hosts the major league baseball Detroit Tigers, Ford Field is the home of the Lions and Joe Louis Arena is home of the Detroit Red Wings. Major intercollegiate athletics can be found just down the road in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan and in East Lansing at Michigan State University..

Each year, Michigan International Speedway (south of Ann Arbor) has several major NASCAR races. Golf, boating, and skiing are popular recreational activities in southeast Michigan. There are 450 lakes in Oakland County alone (including two adjacent to the office), 36 public golf courses, and most of southern Michigan's ski resorts. The Alpine Valley Ski resort is located 3 miles west of the office and Indian Springs Metropark Golf Course sits to the immediate west of the office. The Motown area has a rich history in music and several great concert venues. These include the Fox Theater in downtown Detroit's entertainment district, DTE Music Theater (near the office), Meadowbrook Music Theater (at Oakland University), Hill Auditorium (University of Michigan), and The Palace (Auburn Hills).

The Detroit area is also home to several well-known museums including Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, The Museum of African American History, and the Detroit Institute of Arts. Numerous festivals and shows occur in southeast Michigan throughout the year. Some of the largest include the Ann Arbor Street Art Fairs in July, the International Freedom Festival in Detroit/Windsor (celebrating Canada Day and Independence Day), and the North American International Auto Show at Cobo Center in Detroit. Great dining can be found in Greektown in downtown Detroit, in Frankenmuth (north of Flint), and in the college atmosphere in downtown Ann Arbor.

**EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES :** The area has many public, private and parochial schools. Oakland County has vocational/technical programs at career centers, community colleges, 42 public high schools, 11 colleges and universities, and 57 private occupational schools. Oakland University, located in Rochester is a four year liberal arts university with general teacher preparatory and professional programs. Oakland Community College is located in Bloomfield Hills and is a two year school wholly or principally creditable toward an Associate degree. St. Mary's College, located in Orchard Lake, is a small four-year liberal arts college. These schools are representative of what you will find in Oakland County. In Washtenaw County exists the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti. In Wayne County there is the University of Detroit and Wayne State University.

**HOUSING:** Oakland County is one of the nation's most affluent counties and one of its largest bedroom communities, with roughly 1.5 million suburbanites. Urbanization increases very rapidly southeastward from the site (toward Detroit), while the area to the northwest remains rural with scattered small towns. Housing opportunities in the area are wide-ranging, providing something for everyone. There are several new housing developments within 3 miles of the office (including right next door). Similar housing availability and pricing exists in the surrounding cities of Flint, Detroit, and Ann Arbor. Rental units are



scarce close to the office but more numerous in the nearby population centers.

**TRANSPORTATION:** There is no public transportation available near the office. Employees must drive to work, and ample free parking for employees is available at the office. Access to the office from surrounding communities such as Flint, Pontiac, and Ann Arbor is uncomplicated and traffic in and out of the region surrounding the office flows smoothly despite the high population centers. Oakland County is bisected by I-75 from Northwest to

Southeast, by I-96 along the southern part of the county, and by M-59 through the central part of the county. Both M-59 and I-75 pass within a few miles of the office providing easy access from these major thoroughfares. The Oakland-Pontiac Airport, 4 miles away, is one of the busiest corporate and general aviation airports in the nation. The nearest common air-carrier service is at Bishop International Airport located in Flint, 25 miles north of the office, with Detroit Metropolitan Airport (a major Delta Airlines Hub and a brand new airport) situated 45 miles to the south.

**TAXES:** Michigan has a 4.4 percent state income tax and a 6 percent sales tax (food and medicine excluded). The real estate tax is based on 50 percent of the market value, and varies with local millage. Millage in the townships surrounding the site is lower than in the villages and cities at greater distance.